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THE STABILITY
OF
FREEMASONRY.

AN ADDRESS

DELIVERED ON THE OCCASION OF THE INSTALLATION OF THE OFFICERS OF

METROPOLITAN LODGE No. 273,
F. & A. M.,

NEW YORK CITY,

ON THURSDAY EVENING, DECEMBER 28, 1865.

BY THE

revised
REV. F. C. EWER,
" *at twilight*

GRAND CHAPLAIN OF THE GRAND LODGE OF THE STATE OF NEW YORK.

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CORRESPONDENCE.

NEW YORK, January 4, 1866.

R. W. F. C. EWER:

REV. SIR AND BROTHER--The undersigned, Committee of Metropolitan Lodge No. 273, tender to you, in behalf of their Lodge, their warmest thanks for the aid rendered by you in their endeavor to make the late Reunion profitable and agreeable, and ask for publication the manuscript of your address delivered on that occasion.

Fraternally yours,

B. REED,
R. H. HINSDALE,
CHAS. T. CHICKHAUS,
WM. R. ELLIS,
ISAAC MILLS.

REPLY.

NEW YORK, January 5, 1866.

BRETHREN—I herewith place the manuscript of my address at your disposal.

Fraternally yours,

F. C. EWER.

BROTHERS B. REED,
R. H. HINSDALE,
and others, } *Committee of Arrangements.*

ORATION.

STABILITY OF FREEMASONRY.

MOST WORSHIPFUL GRAND MASTER, BRETHREN, AND
GENTLEMEN AND LADIES :

In the discharge of the duty and privilege with which this Worshipful Lodge has honored me, and for which I return very cordial thanks, my remarks will take their tenor from an evident misapprehension of the nature and design of Freemasonry recently displayed in high and influential quarters. Not, indeed, that the foundations of our Order are so insecure, its internal structure so weak, or its designs such as to render it necessary for us to meet misunderstanding with explanations, or, indeed, at any time to take public precautionary measures of defense against foes ; but that we may pay a generous deference to our uninitiated friends who, in view of a recent startling attack upon us, may desire to have their favorable impressions of Masonry confirmed.

We cannot expect immunity from that discipline of sunshine and storm which is the lot of all permanent and valuable organizations, whether political, governmental, or religious. Nothing, indeed, ever grew great and strong under uninterrupted prosper-

ity. The very secrecy of Masonry is calculated to create jealousy and suspicion; which, though they may long remain dormant, are ever in condition to break out into action. Indeed, as they surround us, now sleeping and now arousing, they unwittingly conduce to our growth. For, in the alternate periods of prosperity and adversity through which Masonry has passed, we see the hand of Providence, which will neither suffer her to become enfeebled by too long a continuance of peace, nor crushed out of being by too long a period of opposition.

There are brethren still living who bear sorrowful remembrance of days when to be a Freemason was to be an object of scorn—when the whole heavens above our order were lowering. Fortunately all this is very much changed. We see the change in the smiling faces of these friends who have come up out of the world in crowds to grace our festive occasion. Still, all is not peace around about us. Opposition has broken out in a fresh quarter.

Not many weeks since, a vast and powerful portion of the Christian Church, after deliberate consultation, uttered its solemn maledictions against Freemasonry, launched anathemas upon all its children who presume to enter our gates, and summoned those who are already within to come forth. The Roman Church, through its recognized source of authority, declares Freemasonry to be hostile to the true interests of man, and infidel in its tendencies. I have characterized this as a startling attack. For, however secure, brethren, we may be as an organization,

however conscious we may be of the purity of our aims, however calmly and defiantly we may gaze out upon any storms that can gather around us, how little soever we may be absolutely dependent upon public opinion, it is useless to say that it is not in the heart of men, and in the heart of Masonry, to be gratified in having the good rather than the bad opinion of the world. Our sense of justice, if nothing else, prompts this feeling. While, therefore, we are, professedly, not over anxious touching the opinion of the world, our true position seems to be, Most Worshipful Sir, not to remain, on the other hand, utterly indifferent to that opinion. Now, if you, my brethren, regard this attack from Rome as of no possible moment because we are in a Protestant land, I beg to express the view that such judgment is quite erroneous. Rome and Protestantism are, indeed, hostile to each other; but there are certain broad Christian truths upon which they both agree, and which unite them against their common foe, Infidelity. And this dictum from Rome is at least calculated to give Protestants an impression that their more vigilant ally has discovered something in Masonry antagonistic to those truths equally cherished by all Christians. It is calculated to confirm such prejudices, as many Protestant clergy and laity have already formed against our Order.

Nor is this all that tends to give the attack importance; for we must remember that we are one body, and that what affects any part affects the whole. We must remember that Masonry is not local, is not con-

finned to this city or State; that it is catholic; that it is everywhere, knowing no limits short of the limits of the human race. And when a Christian body, well knit, well trained to subordination unto the dicta of its constituted authorities—a Christian body holding under its sway the peoples of France, Italy, Austria, Spain, Belgium, Portugal, and Ireland, that is to say, nearly one-half of all the first-class powers on earth, and several of the minor European nationalities, holding, also, Mexico, Lower Canada, and all of the South American continent, swaying the minds, moreover, of swarms of adherents which form a large portion of our own people—when a powerful Christian Church, numbering no less than one hundred and seventy millions of obedient children, rises in the stern attitude of warning and command, its dicta and its opposition, are not to be despised. Masonry must be a gigantic and a growing power, or the Roman Church would not have troubled itself to arouse for the purpose of beating it down and destroying it, if possible. War is declared, and we have here the battle of the giants.

In view of all this, I shall ask your attention to several phenomena, in connection with Masonry, calculated to arrest the thought of its bitterest opponent, and suggest to him the fact that Masonry must be so founded, and of such structure, as to render any attempt at its overthrow, or even permanent injury, utterly hopeless.

I. The first of these phenomena is its duration. How will you account for this?

Schools of philosophy have no perpetuity of existence. Peculiar modes of social life last but for a time. The Spartan mode, the old Jewish mode, the Middle Age mode are gone. Even empires are formed, culminate, and die. But Masonry, as a realm and as a school of thought and truth, not only outlives them all, but is fresh and vigorous in every century. Now, what is the mortal taint which finally destroys all those institutions for the good of man, and all those schools of thought which appear for awhile on the field of history and then disappear? They are destructible, and finally die, because they contain elements either of sin, of falsehood, or of mere relative truth; that is to say, doctrines or theories which are true only relatively to the period in which they arise, or to the development of man's mind in their day. Carry that mind forward a century or two, and let it reach a larger development, and what was once accepted by it as truth becomes error, and is rejected for a better, itself to give place in time to a better still. Thus, mere schools of philosophy arise, wane, and go out. No class of men now pretends to claim that Conscience alone is man's guide as he struggles to live entirely right, and so there is no such thing as a Socratic school of philosophy now; nor the Will alone, and so the Stoic school has had its day and died; nor the Reason alone, and so the Platonic school is no more; nor the Affections alone, and so Epicureanism, the loveliest of all theories, is exploded. There is no such school of thought as the Gnostic. Look at the Schoolmen, too, who once divided the

thinking world between nominalism and realism; the moment the Reformation touched their systems they dissolved. How will you account, then, amid all these fleeting schools, and systems, and empires, and modes of social life, for the exceptional duration of Masonry? There is only one other like case in all history, and that is the Christian Church. Nothing seems able to exterminate either. All the differing cohorts of Time, coming in successively on the line of her march to attack her, Masonry seems to defy.

I will tell you, my friends. There is one, and but one, way of accounting for this phenomenon. It is the way in which we account for the similar phenomenon of perpetual duration in Christianity. Masonry endures simply because she does not teach any truth which can be outgrown by man. Her main truths are not merely relative to any social mode, or to any given development of mind; but they are absolute, eternal truths. It is such alone that endure through all ages, and are fresh in every age. And not until those truths can be stricken from being can any foe of Masonry, in any age, or of any power, even though that foe wield the power of one hundred and seventy millions of people, attack her with the slightest hope of success. She shall stand while kingdoms and empires shall form and melt around her. She shall stand, handmaid of Christianity, until her mission as such handmaid shall be fulfilled. She shall stand as long as a slave is left, a just right denied to man, a mob dare to raise its head; as long as atheism, pantheism, or deism, in any of its forms, exists,

and until war shall sheathe its sword forever. When the kingdoms of this world shall become kingdoms of Christ, then, and not till then, will Masonry be no longer needed.

II. The second phenomenon which I shall mention is the internal social and governmental structure of Masonry. Mankind may be of one blood, but there are vast differences in that blood. As a consequence, different social structures and different kinds of government are needed and developed by the different peoples of earth. The Latin peoples, those nations namely, which occupy the southwest of Europe, and all of the American continent south of and including Mexico, demand autocratic rule; and whenever they attempt republicanism, as witness France, Mexico, Peru, and all the countries of South America, except Brazil, are in perpetual civil turmoil. Their blood is such, and the instincts of that blood are such, that they can only flourish under a king or an emperor in State, not to say a pope in Church. The Teutonic races, on the other hand, chafe under a condition of permanent social grades in life. Their instincts are for freedom and equality. They, on the contrary, are uneasy under autocratic rule, and are only quiet when they have overthrown it entirely, or reduced the king from a power to a mere pageant. Thus, national governments shade all the way along from autocracy at one extreme to democracy at the other, to suit the genius and instincts of the several peoples to be governed.

Now, the phenomenon is that Freemasonry, with

her peculiar government and her social structure, goes into all lands, and is accepted and beloved by widely differing people with widely diverse social instincts and governmental requirements. How is this? The fact is, and the only explanation of the enigma is, that she is in harmony, not with a certain kind of blood—the Latin, or the Semitic, or the Slavic, or Anglo-Saxon—but that she is in harmony with man. She is not a partial, but a universal, fact. And whatever is in harmony with man is indestructible as long as man lasts, and its mission remains unfulfilled. Were she calculated to be the special favorite of a nation or a people, she might well tremble for her life when that nation falls, or that people merges itself into a higher and loses its identity. But I have met, Sir, within our mystic walls, the European, the South American, the Persian, and the Chinese.

A short time since I had the honor, in company with others of my countrymen, of visiting a French Lodge in this city. I was struck with the fact that within its walls were gathered the representatives of two national types of men, differing widely from each other—the French and the American; that the two elements were forming a one new and harmonious band—a Masonic people—with no uneasiness in the breasts of either element; all at rest, and satisfied with our social forms and our peculiar government. And the thought struck me at the time, how benign was the influence which Masonry was shedding upon each type of man; how it at once met opposite wants in both!

For what is one of the wants of the European man? It is, Most Worshipful Sir, a fuller and more practical recognition of the worth of a man considered as such, regardless of his title, birth, wealth, or any other accident that may have elevated or depressed him in the social scale of the world. Now what does Masonry do? It quietly fosters the principle of equality among men. As the nobleman and the laborer pass through the inner gate of our temple, all worldly distinctions, all titles, save that of "Brother," drop off behind them as a cloak, and they enter and stand within upon the great level of a common humanity; then the laborer may be seen advancing and taking his seat as Master of the Lodge, and the prince of the realm sitting obedient at his feet.

On the other hand, what is one of the wants of the American man? It is an opposite want. It is a fuller respect for authority, less self-will, the checking of the instinct within him for insubordination. And Masonry quietly fosters the growth of this. For, if on the floor of the Lodge all men are equal, simply because they are men, free-born, and of good report, the Master sits in the East ruling his Lodge with absolute sway, commanding the respect, and enforcing the obedience of all his workmen. Thus, to whichever extreme, to the Empire with its permanent social grades, or to the Republic with its freedom and self-will, or wherever between those extremes Masonry goes, she sheds a benign organizing influence upon man; and the moment man in whatever nation recognizes her, he finds her blessing;

and not all the Roman Catholicism in existence can avail to separate her from the heart of man which hath taken her to itself.

III. A third phenomenon which I would mention is the great witness of Masonry to a truth which is in harmony with man's deepest nature; and the peace, therefore, which she brings to him. There are certain dicta which pass for truths, and under which men act, but which give them no peace and satisfaction. Their prevalence marks the beginning of man's education. They may be in harmony with the surface of his nature, but not with its depths. It is the depths of his nature that will have satisfaction. It is a part of the development of man to find calm and rest by acting in accordance with truths which are in real, not mere apparent harmony with his nature. For error of any kind is not in harmony with the deepest nature of man, and gives him unrest rather than calm.

Let me illustrate. When man begins his education in any department, the first thing he observes in that department is diversity. He looks, for instance, on the vegetable kingdom, and only sees manifold diversity—grasses, trees, vines, and sea-weeds, with no apparent unity and order, with no one law governing the development of the whole. He finds no rest in this view of things. He then slowly passes from confusion and discord into a recognition of the essential truth, the unity, namely, of the vegetable kingdom; and not till at last he has learned the great secret—not till he thus looks upon the vegetable

kingdom as one vast being, with many members, but all guided by one law, vivified, if I may so express it, with one soul, does he find satisfaction and calm. So, too, with the animal kingdom ; so, too, with the stars, apparently strewn all over the heavens without order. His deepest nature craves not partial and mere superficial truths, but the great underlying eternal truths. So, too, finally, and to come to the point, with his own species. At first, the fact of diversity and mutual hostility among men is accepted by man, and his actions are governed accordingly. To him a stranger tribe is a natural foe. A people living on the other slope of a mountain range is a normal enemy. A man who speaks a different language or bears a different hue on his face is an antagonist. This view marks the beginning of man's education. It is not the essential truth. Dwelling in it, the race is in a state of unrest. But, starting thus low down among apparent diversity and want of order, man is to go up into rest by passing from what is apparent to what is real. And Masonry's great witness is to nothing which is true relatively, to no form of belief which is fleeting, but it is to the absolute truth—the great fact of the unity and the brotherhood of man. She witnesses, therefore, to what is in harmony with our profoundest instincts, and so her influence is calming wherever it is felt. And it is in that calm she gives, that she finds lasting friends, strength, and security against all successful attacks.

IV. A fourth phenomenon is Masonry's fascina-

tion ; its strange hold at once upon men of mind and culture, and upon the ignorant and superficial. Christianity and the Bible are the only other like instances. How happens it that the shallow man can move pleased upon the surface and among the fair symbols of Masonry, and the profound man range at will and tireless in its depths? Ye who despise Masonry, who regard it as a mere amusement for boys of larger growth, on what principle can you account for this? So long as it attracts and holds all grades of mind, there must be something in it which is in harmony with the human mind in all its capacities. And not till you strike down that mind in its varying capacities can opposition avail to obliterate from the earth that universal thing which is in harmony with all mental capacities. Masonry may cease to be, but it can never be murdered.

V. I must not draw to a close without at least alluding to the terrible charge that Masonry is infidel in its tendencies. One sufficient answer to that charge is as follows, viz. :

Freemasonry, so far as the Blue Lodge and the Chapter are concerned, is founded upon the Old Testament. It is full of the profoundest spiritual truths clothed in symbol and type. The Old Testament is founded upon the New Testament ; that is to say, it is a meaningless mass unless explained by the New Testament. The signification of all its types and prophecies and symbols and hidden things is given in the New Testament. Finally, the New Testament rests upon

Christ. It is meaningless without him. I repeat, there stands the composite structure: Christ, as the great foundation; resting upon Him, the New Testament; resting upon it the Old Testament; resting upon that, Masonry. It all means one thing, or it all means nothing. Masonry hath its esoteric as well as its exoteric teaching. And he who has not found this great unity of meaning between Masonry, the Bible, and the Bible's one great Character, though he may admire Masonry, has failed to rise where he can look upon her true sublimity. He stands but in her outside, her exoteric courts. He has not gone into her great depths. It would be impossible for Masonry, founded on the Bible, not to mean the truths of the Bible: the fall of man, the ruined temple of his nature, his death from sin, the means of his resurrection in the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the rebuilding of his ruined nature into a perfect temple, eternal in the heavens, and the great Corner-stone for that rebuilding.

We are charged, my brethren and Most Worshipful Sir, with being an institution infidel in its tendencies. It is a very serious charge. Coming as it does out of a portion of the Christian Church, it is doubly serious. If there were cause for the whole Christian Church to adopt it and act accordingly, we might tremble for the existence of Masonry. It is useless to deny or seek to soften this conclusion. For it takes but half an eye to see that Christianity is dominant, and is destined to ride on conquering and to conquer. Compare its power and its spread

in the world now with its condition eighteen hundred years ago. Look at its career. It is making captive, it is gradually absorbing, the whole world. Nothing has been able to withstand it, and nothing can withstand it. Before its advance every obstruction breaks down under the pressure of its muscular arm. And I repeat, Most Worshipful Grand Master, were this charge just, and adopted by the whole Christian Church, then farewell to Masonry sooner or later.

But if the charge be true, then how do you account for the additional phenomenon of the vast numbers of the Christian ministry who are Masons? Are all these men duped? No, Most Worshipful Sir; they know what Christianity is, what are its profound doctrines of the Trinity, and the temple of human nature ruined and rebuilt, and the fall, and the Lion of Judah, and the plumb-line, and the resurrection from the dead, and the white stone, and the Corner-stone of the human temple, which was rejected because it did not square with man's notions, but was found by others and made the Head-stone of the corner; they know very well how God taught the Jews by symbols and by types; they know very well what it typifies to be covered with the skin of *the Lamb without spot*; they know what the descending fire from heaven was, and who was within the burning bush, and the Tri-unity that is within the vail; and besides all this, they know very well what is rationalistic or infidel in its tendencies. And as for this charge, that Masonry is infidel or rational-

istic in its tendencies, you might as well charge the Old Testament with being infidel in its tendencies. As for this foul charge, in the name of thousands of clergymen who are Masons, in the name of thousands upon thousands of intelligent Christian laymen who are Masons, in the name of the Most Worshipful Grand Lodge of the State of New York, and of the Masonic body in all the world, I pronounce it untrue, and cast it back into the face of Roman Catholicism with scorn and defiance.

But why, it is asked, do we not, in Blue Lodge and Chapter, close our prayers with the name of Christ? "There appears to be no difference between your prayers" (continues the objector) "and mere deistic prayers." This objection involves a longer discussion and explanation than I can enter into here, or than I am, perhaps, permitted to make known to the world. But I can, at least, ask our caviler one question in reply, which settles the whole matter. Do you find the name of Jesus Christ mentioned in all the Old Testament? But go you far enough in the Bible, and you will come upon that name. So, likewise, go you far enough in Masonry—and you will know just as much as Masons know. Prophecy is not fulfillment. The period of type and prophecy is not the period of anti-type and fulfillment. There are certain things which are *of* the purpose of Blue Lodge and Chapter, and certain things which are *from* their purpose. The "brother" in the dawning twilight of "The Lodge" and the "Companion" in the morning light of "The Chapter," each "awaits a time in patience" till the

noon-day breaks upon him in "The Encampment." Then all types find their antitypes, all prophecies their fulfillment. Thus Masonry so diffuses light, that it shall not dazzle or blind, but gradually illuminate, till those "in the dimness" shall come to the perfect day of knowledge. Thus much for the world. Of you, my brethren, I would ask, does he who draws the Masonic sword take any obligation inconsistent with the meaning of the grades in Lodge and Chapter through which he has already passed? Christianity is the antagonist of Rationalism and mere Deism. And Lodge and Chapter would be infidel to Christianity if *in themselves* they had no further teaching than of that God simply which the Deist and the Mohammedan holds; if, in short, *esoterically*, they were not Christian in their teaching. If Lodge and Chapter have not this esoteric teaching, if *Christian* truths do *not* shine like diamonds through the crystal casket of her symbols and mechanism, then what must follow? It must follow inevitably that the military degrees in Encampment would be compelled to draw the sword and turn back upon the Blue and the Chapter degrees for their destruction, and so Masonry, in its three great stages, would present the horrible spectacle of a monster which had taken antagonistic oaths, and which was under the most solemn obligations to accomplish *its own suicide*. No; the Knight is not the *foe*, but the illuminated *brother* of the "Master Mason" and the "Companion."

To conclude, then. Suited to all ages, because her

truth is absolute ; suited to all peoples and nations, because she belongs to man ; suited to every religion, because her " light " so dawns, as to enlighten without blinding the lowest, and cheer the way of each up to the highest ; enduring and calm, because her witness is to the eternal truth of the brotherhood of man ; fascinating the unlettered and commanding the respect and admiration of the profound, her root running down through the Bible and spreading abroad below in Christ, her branches cover the world, her fruit partakes of the rich juices from Christ, and drops everywhere for the weal of man.

ESOTERIC MASONRY.

IN order that I may not be misunderstood in the fifth section of the above address, let me here distinctly state that I do not claim that Freemasonry is the Christian Church, or that it is one of the Christian sects. It makes no pretensions to be either the one or the other. Its symbolic references to the Holy Ghost are very few, and it has no sacraments. Christianity goes within to the heart, and works outward toward the conduct. If the man loves aright, he will do right. It thus breaks the chain of law, and wipes out written codes for the guidance of man. Masonry does not infringe upon this principle of action; does not in any sense usurp the throne, assume the duties, or preclude the necessity of the Church. On the other hand, Masonry binds the chain of law, for as yet the world is not all Christian, and all chains cannot be broken; nor is Christendom all Christian; nor are all Christians—I may almost say, nor is *any* Christian—as yet made perfect by the supreme sway of love within. The twilight of the dispensation of law stretches into the domain of the dispensation of love. This gives its sanction and its mission to Masonry throughout Christendom as well as throughout Heathendom.

Besides, while the Christian Church can hold only Christians, Masonry is so marvelously constructed that she can include all who believe in a God, and can do so without violence to Christian sentiment. This is her use and her glory. For she holds them, not to confirm any in such partial views as they may have, not to leave them partly in light and partly in shadow; she holds them for advancement to better and better views, till at last the very best are reached. He who sees not this, knows not what the "Masonic light" is, and falls into the error of calling that "light" darkness. Masonry's mission is to shed illumination till *all* shadows of religious error are removed.

I claim that Masonry is universal in her embrace of men; and that, therefore, she does not and cannot exclude *any* class of believers in God: that she does not, above all things, shut out from her gates the very highest and most advanced type of man—namely, the modern enlightened Christian man. If she did, she would be partial, not universal; she would be effete, not fresh; she would be decrepit, with her grave lying not far before her. I claim that she would not shut out from her precincts her own patron, the beloved Saint John the Evangelist. If she did not include Christian truths in her symbolism, she would (being merely deistic in her teachings), exclude the conscientious Christian man. I claim that she is so universal in her embrace of men, that she belongs to all time prior to the Millenium; and that, therefore, she does not declare herself hostile to the

deepest and best thought of time—to those Christian dogmas, namely, which are “the fruit of twenty centuries of profound reflection,” ripened under the grace and inspiration of God. I claim such universality for Masonry as her glory. With it, she is powerful; without it, she becomes poor, miserable, and very weak.

Furthermore, I do not merely claim that Masonry is not antagonistic to Christian light, but I claim that she positively sheds that light (to those whose eyes can bear it) out of every one of her types and symbols; that she hath an *esoteric* as well as an *exoteric* teaching; and that *that esoteric teaching is and has always been regarded as Christian*.

For this is no private theory of my own. Its correctness rests not on my poor authority. It is true, as I studied Masonry, advancing step by step, it was without guide that I entered her inmost shrine. Unaware that others had been there before me, I moved with awe and reverence in her golden Holy of Holies; and, at last, I came forth and timidly told of what I had seen. But, lo! I found that years, *centuries* ago, it had all been shouted from the house-tops. I had not *created* an esoteric meaning for Masonry; I had but *discovered* that she had such a meaning. Then Masonry, lovely before, became to me sublime.

I proceed now to give corroborative testimony to the truth of what is claimed above, and in the fifth section of my address.

A. D. 1820.

The following extract is from a work ("Spirit of Masonry") published under the sanction and approbation of the Grand Lodge of England, nearly a half century ago, viz.:

"The knowledge of the God of nature forms the *first* estate of our profession; the worship of the Deity under the Jewish law is described in the *second* step of Masonry; and the Christian dispensation is distinguished in the last and highest order."

A. D. 590.

The following is from book four, section two, of "Preston's Illustrations:"

"About the year of our Lord 590, the Picts and Scots," says the annalist, "continued their depredations with unrestrained vigor, till the arrival of some pious teachers from Wales and Scotland; when, many of these savages *being reconciled to Christianity, Masonry got into repute.*"

A. D. 1825.

The author of "The Antiquities of Masonry" and of "The Star in the East," George Oliver, Vicar of Clee, who was for years W.: M.: of one of the English Lodges, in defending Freemasonry, writes as follows, viz.:

"As its instructions proceed, we learn that our

groundwork is sanctified by the efficacy of *Three Religious Offerings*, which are typical of the great sacrifice of Atonement by Jesus Christ; and that our splendid *canopy* contains a *LETTER* of the most extensive reference and the most comprehensive meaning. The *elevation* in the *Third Degree* refers to the resurrection from the dead; and this is a clear admission of the reality of a future state, because, if there be no future state, there can be no resurrection. Our solemn dedications and consecrations speak the same language, and they are irrefragable evidences of the intimate connection which subsists between Masonry and religion. If we proceed another step, the evidence becomes stronger. The order of the Royal Arch is founded exclusively on religion. The degree is purely religious, and includes little but what is connected with the love and worship of God, and the wise and genial regulations of Divine Providence for the benefit of man. The very tests are founded on the fall of Adam, and the consequent degradation of the human race, enforced by the salutary promise of their future restoration through the intercession of a Mediator. If this be not religion, if this be not Christianity, what is it?"

Again, he says, in speaking of the Templars :

"Every Knight was necessarily a Mason, and no one was eligible for the dignity of the golden spur but he who had been prepared by a previous initiation into the three degrees of Masonry. This is a

strong collateral proof of the ancient alliance between Masonry and religion; for these high-minded men, who had nothing in view but the extension of Christianity, evinced their reverence for Masonry as a religious system by making it a *sine qua non* with all who aspired to admission into their honorable body. Amidst the enthusiastic spirit and sacred feelings which animated these champions of Christianity, they would scarcely have shown such a distinguished predilection for any system founded on a basis which excluded religion."

A. D. 1686.

In the short reign of King James II., A. D. 1686, a manuscript was written which is now preserved in the Lodge of Antiquity, England. It contains the following passages :

"Every man that is a Mason, take good heed to these charges, we pray ; that if a man find himself guilty of any of these charges, that he may amend himself, or principally for dread of God, &c., &c. *The first charge is, that ye shall be true men to God and to the holy church, and to use no error or heresy by your understanding and by wise men's teaching.*" And after enumerating more than twenty charges, it concludes thus : "These be all the charges and covenants that ought to be read at an instalment of a Master, or making of a Freemason or Freemasons. The Almighty God of Jacob, who ever have you

and me in His keeping, bless us now and ever, Amen."

A. D. 1480.

An ancient Masonic manuscript, written *about the end of the fifteenth century*, and published in the Gentlemen's Magazine for June, 1815, commences in the following manner :

"The might of the Father of Kings, with the wisdom of His glorious grace, through the grace of the goodness of the Holy Ghost, there bene three persons in one Godheade, be with us at our beginning, and give us grace so to governe us here in this mortall life liveing, that we may come to his kingdome that never shall have endinge."

The above gives the Esoteric meaning of the three thrones that govern the Lodge, the three raps, the three greater lights, the three lesser lights, the triple substituted ***—***—*** the triplicity which becomes—as every Royal Arch Mason knows—more involved as we go up in the Chapter, and which is no longer Esoteric, but becomes Exoteric in the Encampment.

A. D. 1772.

The Rev. James Hart, in a sermon preached at Durham, in the year 1772, says: "Masonry is founded on that sure rock, against which let the waves and

billows of temporal persecution never so strongly dash, it will stand erect and secure, because *that rock is Christ.*"

A. D. 1794.

In an address on Masonry, delivered near the close of the last century, Bro.: the Rev. James Watson, of Lancaster, says :

"Masonry has the Omnipotent Architect of the Universe for the object of its adoration and imitation ; His great and wonderful works for its pattern and prototype ; and the wisest and best of men of all ages, nations, and languages for its patrons and professors. But though Masonry primarily inculcates morals and the religion of nature, it has caught an additional spark from the light of revelation and the *Sun of Righteousness*. And though Masonry continues to burn with subordinate lustre, it lights the human traveller on the same road ; it breathes a concordant spirit of universal benevolence and brotherly love, adds one thread more to the silken cord of evangelical charity which binds man to man, and crowns the cardinal virtues with Christian graces. The three degrees of Masonry seem to have an obvious and apt coincidence with the three progressive stages of mankind, from the creation to the end of time. The first is emblematical of man's state of nature, from his first disobedience to the time of God's covenant with Abraham, and the establishment of the Jewish economy. The second, from that period to the era of

the last, full, and perfect revelation from Heaven to mankind, made by our Great Redeemer. The third, comprehending the glorious interval of the Christian dispensation down to the consummation of all things."

A. D. 1814.

In the early part of this century, Bro.: William Hutchinson, in speaking to the world of Masonry, says :

" It is not to be presumed that we are a set of men professing religious principles contrary to the revelations and doctrines of the Son of God ; reverencing a Deity by the denomination of the God of nature, and denying that mediation which is graciously offered to all true believers. *The members of our Society at this day*, in the third stage of Masonry, confess themselves to be *Christians* ; the veil of the temple is rent, the builder is smitten, and we are raised from the tomb of transgression. *The Master Mason represents a man under the Christian doctrine, saved from the grave of iniquity, and raised to the faith of salvation.*"

FROM AN ENTERED APPRENTICE LECTURE.

The following is an extract from an E.: A.: Lecture in a Manual published under the approval and

sanction of the Grand Lodge of England, early in the present century, viz. :

Speaking of the blazing star :—" We may apply this emblem to still more religious import : it represents the star which led the wise men to Bethlehem ; proclaimed to mankind the nativity of the Son of God ; and here conducting our spiritual progress to the author of our redemption."

A. D. 1820.

From a M. : M. : Lecture as read in English Lodges :

" *The sprig of Acacia* points to that state of moral obscurity to which the world was reduced previously to the appearance of Christ upon earth : when the reverence and adoration due to the Divinity was *buried in the filth and rubbish of the world* ; when religion sat mourning in sackcloth and ashes, and morality was *scattered to the four winds of heaven*. In order that mankind might be preserved from this deplorable estate of darkness and destruction, and as the old law was *dead and become rottenness*, a new doctrine and new precepts were wanting to give the *key* to salvation, in the language of which we might touch the ear of an offended Deity and bring forth hope for eternity. True religion was fled ; those who sought her through the wisdom of the antients were not able to *raise her* ; *she eluded the grasp, and their polluted hands* were stretched forth in vain for her restoration. Those who sought her by the old law were frustrated,

for death had stepped between, and corruption had defiled the embrace; sin had beset her steps, and the vices of the world had overwhelmed her. The Great Father of all, commiserating the miseries of the world, sent His only Son, who was innocence itself, to teach the doctrine of salvation; *by whom man was RAISED from the death of sin unto a life of righteousness*; from the tomb of corruption unto the chambers of hope; from the darkness of despair to the celestial beams of faith; and not only working for us this redemption, but making with us the covenant of regeneration, whence we become the children of God and inheritors of the realms of heaven."

A. D. 1825.

In speaking of the Esoterics of Masonry, the author of the "Antiquities of Masonry" says :

"Masonry, like all other sciences, cannot be attained without assiduous and diligent labor; for the signs and tokens of external communication are but the keys of the cabinet in which all our valuable knowledge is stored up. * * * * Initiation, without subsequent research, is an acquisition which can scarcely be pronounced desirable; but he who uses the keys of our treasure with *freedom, fervency, and zeal*; or, in the language of Masonry, he who keeps them highly polished with *chalk, charcoal, and clay* will find a precious jewel at every step he takes; and while he presses on with ardor in the pursuit of

knowledge and virtue, he may be certain of attaining the rich prize he has in view.”—*Star in the East*, pp. 160, 161.

A. D. 1862.

Mackay, in his celebrated Manual, bears the following testimony; the extract is under M.: M.: D.:, Sec. 2, p. 102 :

“The *small hill* near Mount Moriah can be clearly identified by the most convincing analogies as being no other than Mount Calvary. Thus, Mount Calvary was a *small hill*; it was situated in a *westerly direction* from the Temple, and near Mount Moriah; it was on the direct road from Jerusalem to Joppa, and is thus the very spot where a *weary brother*, traveling on that road, would find it convenient *to sit down to rest and refresh himself*; it was outside of the gate of the Temple; and, lastly, there are several caves, or *clefts in the rocks*, in the neighborhood, one of which, it will be remembered, was, subsequently to the time of this tradition, used as the sepulchre of our Lord. The Christian Mason *will readily perceive the peculiar character of the symbolism which this identification of the spot on which the great truth of the resurrection was unfolded in both systems—the Masonic and the Christian—must suggest.*”

With one more extract from the work entitled “The Star in the East,” I conclude, viz. :

“The genius of Masonry can assimilate with no other religion so completely as with Christianity. The *historical* part of its lectures bears an undoubted reference to our pure religion ; and this coincidence is so remarkably striking, that it would almost convince an unprejudiced mind, that Masonry was formed as an exclusive companion for Christianity. The strength of this testimony is increased by the nature and tendency of its *symbolical instruction*, by the peculiar cast of its *morality*, and by the very extraordinary nature of its *allegorical mechanism* ; extraordinary on any other principle than with a reference to Christianity.”

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